

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-03 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 SAB-01

SAM-01 DRC-01 /179 W

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R 071135Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2133

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4607

DEPARTMENT PASS AMBASSADOR PICKERING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, JO

SUBJECT: GOJ MOVES TO SPEED DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION

REF: AMMAN 1946

1. AMMAN PRESS REPORTED THAT THE PM CHAIRED A FOUR-HOUR MEETING OF THE NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL ON JULY 31, THE MAIN TOPIC OF WHICH WAS A REVIEW OF THE REPORTS OF SOME SECTORIAL COMMITTEES ON DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROJECTS. NEWSPAPERS HAVE SINCE REPORTED THAT THE PM ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE TO ALL GOJ AGENCIES, URGING MORE RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROJECTS. PRESS REPORTS NOTED THAT FINANCING HAD BEEN SECURED FOR ALL PLAN PROJECTS AND THAT DELAYS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN ARE SLOWING GROWTH AND INCREASING COSTS BECAUSE OF INFLATION. IN ADDITION, DELAYS IN DISBURSING FUNDS MAKE FOREIGN DONORS HESITANT TO MAKE COMMITMENTS. GOJ AGENCIES ARE NOW TO SUBMIT MONTHLY REPORTS ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL.

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2. PM'S DIRECTIVE IS AN OVERDUE MOVE TO SPEED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO GOJ REPORTS IN APRIL (REFTEL), FUNDING OF PUBLIC SECTOR PROJECTS IN 1973 WAS ONLY 61.9 PERCENT OF THE TARGET OF JD 34 MILLION, ALTHOUGH A RECENT EMBASSY IN-HOUSE ANALYSIS INDICATES A SLIGHTLY HIGHER RATE OF IMPLEMENTATION. PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN SPENDING THIS YEAR, JD 57.7 MILLION, IS FAR MORE AMBITIOUS THAN THE 1973 TARGET. A MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIAL RECENTLY NOTED THAT HIS AGENCIES' IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS WAS FAR BEHIND SCHEDULE.

3. THE RECENT DIRECTIVE APPEARS TO CHANGE THE PROCEDURE FOR PROJECT FOLLOW UP. THE PROJECT OPERATIONS STATUS INFORMATION CENTER (POSIC) HAS UNTIL NOW BEEN THE CENTER FOR INFORMATION AND FEED BACK ON PLAN PROJECTS. POSIC IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROYAL SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY, BUT WORKS UNDER CONTRACT TO THE NPC. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE NPC HAS NEVER BEEN SATISFIED WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF POSIC, WHILE THE WORLD BANK REPRESENTATIVE IN AMMAN NOTED THAT THE POSIC REPORTS ON BANK FINANCED PROJECTS ARE INACCURATE.

4. THE FUTURE OF POSIC IS UNCLEAR, BUT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NPC APPEAR TO HAVE INCREASED. HOWEVER, THE NPC STAFF, ALREADY THIN, HAS BEEN WEAKENED RECENTLY BY THE RESIGNATION OF SOME OF THE MOST QUALIFIED ENGINEERS. THE NPC WILL HAVE TO BE STRENGTHENED CONSIDERABLY IF FEED BACK AND FOLLOW-UP ARE TO BE IMPROVED. THE PM'S DIRECTIVE DOES APPEAR TO BE A BEGINNING IN ADDRESSING THIS PROBLEM.

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